

do their duty in the darkness of freezing winter nights and in the heat of suffocating summer days without hesitation. The officers and members of Kittatinny Hose & Ladder Co. #1 and Steam Co. #1—along with all members of the Newton Fire Department—deserve our gratitude and thanks.

Kittatinny Hose & Ladder Co. #1 and Steam Co. #1 were both incorporated in September 1873 and throughout their long and distinguished histories have protected both lives and property through the dedication and skill of their many volunteer members. Both have grown vastly in personnel, equipment and other resources over the years. Today, they are among the finest firefighting organizations in the State of New Jersey.

Both fire companies keep their heritage alive with lovingly maintained pieces of antique fire apparatus that show how far firefighting has come since the last century. Kittatinny Hose is the proud owner of an impressive 1849, four-wheel Hose Carriage, while Steamer Co. #1 owns a distinctive 1873 Clapp and Jones Steamer. Both will be on display in Saturday's parade.

Kittatinny Hose & Ladder Co. #1 and Steam Co. #1 have come a long way from the hand-pulled fire wagons of the 19th century. Today's state-of-the-art engines and high-tech equipment put Newton on par with any other fire department in the region. But it takes more than equipment and buildings to run a fire department. It takes dedicated, hard-working individuals willing to put the safety and property of their neighbors first. Kittatinny Hose & Ladder Co. #1 and Steam Co. #1 were founded 125 years ago on the principle of neighbors helping neighbors. That principle has made them a success and will continue to do so in the future.

I would like to ask my colleagues in the House to join me in congratulating Kittatinny Hose & Ladder Co. #1 and Steam Co. #1 on 125 years of meritorious service to the community and in paying tribute to their brave and dedicated firefighters past and present who have sacrificed personal safety in response to the needs of others. The Newton Fire Department and all members of all the fire departments of Sussex County deserve our deepest thanks for their work on the behalf of our community.

WHO'S WATCHING THE WATCHDOG INSPECTOR GENERAL OVER- SIGHT COUNCIL

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 1, 1998

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce legislation to create an Inspector General Oversight Council.

1998 marks the twentieth anniversary of the creation of the Office of Inspector General. It was created to be an independent and objective investigative unit within an agency but not under the jurisdiction of that agency. My intention is not to change the independent nature of the office, but recent events involving the Inspector General's (IG) office have raised concerns about the necessity for oversight. Events such as:

A Treasury Department Deputy Assistant Inspector General asserted pressure for inves-

tigation of an IRS Deputy Commissioner about personal tax matters over which the IG has no jurisdiction. This came after a Senate hearing during which the Deputy IRS Commissioner apologized for IRS abuses of taxpayers.

A former Treasury IG resigned on the eve of the Senate Governmental Affairs Subcommittee on Investigations' release of a report criticizing the awarding of sole-source consulting contracts.

Despite concerns expressed by the Social Security Administration's Commissioner and employee groups, the SSA's IG planned arrest scenarios using SSA field offices to arrest wanted criminals, potentially endangering the public and field office personnel.

A series of skirmishes between the Secretary of HUD and IG of HUD caused Senator FRED THOMPSON (R-TN) to observe "... maybe we ought to try to get someone's attention over there ..." (Washington Post, Sept. 9, 1998).

IGs have three principal responsibilities: to conduct and supervise audits and investigations; to combat fraud and promote efficiency; and to keep Congress and the agency head fully informed about problems and deficiencies. The original act did not anticipate the need to deal with arguments between the Secretary and IG of an agency, and provided no forum for the airing of grievances and input of impartial advice.

The bill I introduce today will create an Oversight Council to address concerns, such as those highlighted earlier, and recommend solutions to Inspector Generals. This would increase public confidence in the federal government by assuring that the Inspector General is held to standards of accountability and integrity while preserving the independent, nonpartisan role of the Inspector General. I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support this legislation to create an Inspector General Oversight Council.

THE NEED TO IMPROVE THE PALESTINIAN ECONOMY

HON. LEE H. HAMILTON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 1, 1998

Mr. HAMILTON. Mr. Speaker, I would like to bring to the attention of my colleagues the Dvar Torah sermon Leo Kramer gave at the Adas Israel Congregation on August 8, 1998. The sermon is entitled "The Palestinians: The Strangers amongst Us."

Leo Kramer is an international business consultant with strong ties to Israel, but also with a strong commitment to helping the Palestinians enhance their economy. He sees Palestinian economic advancement as a key Israeli and U.S. interest and as essential to promoting real and effective peace. He says "We need to change the facts. The facts of Palestinian poverty, lack of export access, lack of dignity and respect. Once the facts change, the attitudes will change." And peace will be promoted.

Leo Kramer's remarks follows:

"THE PALESTINIANS: THE STRANGERS
AMONGST US"

(By Leo Kramer)

As Americans, as Jews, our commitment, our objective is clear—a secure Israel where

Judaism thrives, the salvation of the Jewish people

This is only possible in a peaceful environment.

What has happened the last 50 years?

Where are we now?

The answers ethically and practically are in Torah. Morality leading to action guarantees results.

"Do that which is right and good" (Deuteronomy, Chapter VI, verse 18), page 772 of Hertz Chumash—second edition.

"To do them" (Deuteronomy Chapter IV verse 1), page 756.

Man must act. Not only believe.

Not declarations for peace,

Not excuses based on what is wrong with others.

But to do what is right and "to do" means to deliver on the ground, where people live.

And what is right in our treatment of the strangers is clear.

How to Treat the Strangers (The Palestinians):

1. "You shall not wrong a stranger or oppress him, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt" (Exodus, Chapter 22, verse 20).

2. "And if a stranger sojourn with thee in your land, ye shall not do him wrong, The stranger that sojourneth with you shall be unto you as the home born among you, and thou shalt love him as thyself" (Leviticus Chapter, 19 verses 33-34).

3. "And I charged your Judges ... Hear the causes between your brethren and judge righteously between the man and his brother and the stranger that is with him". (Deuteronomy Chapter IV verse 16).

The strangers amongst us, amongst our brethren, are the Palestinians.

And who are these Palestinians? Stereotypes don't work. Sometimes anecdotal history helps:

Ewan Clague, my colleague, no longer with us, who served four presidents and was the head of the Bureau of Labor Statistics, taught me, "If your eyes differ with data, believe your eyes."

Let me tell you what my eyes have seen and what my ears have heard.

A. When I last was in Amman, people remembered my first visit. Yes, I said, five years ago. No, they said eight.

That was the beginning of this mission taking the road less traveled. And as Robert Frost wrote. . . "that has made all the difference."

When Israel agreed at that time with the European Community on the unrestricted shipment of Palestinian goods to Europe, Israeli leadership asked me to help the Palestinians because they were sure that economic problems would follow.

Sometime later my wife and I were invited to a New Year's Eve party in Amman.

On arrival, we found ourselves meeting with Palestinians who also asked for the same help.

Israelis and Palestinians requesting the same positive help started me on this less traveled road.

B. Soon I found myself setting in a packing house in Gaza. Present were fathers and sons, brothers and uncles and nephews and soon I wondered why they all have the familiar American accent. I asked how come and where they were educated. I found they went to college in Michigan, Tennessee and Arizona.

C. And some time later an orthodox Jew in New York says, "Leo, you must explain to the Palestinians the effect and meaning of Passover. And he prepared an excellent summary for them which I delivered. Not long thereafter, I find myself sitting with the Palestinians in Gaza, explaining Passover. They say they don't get it.

And I explained Passover again and they don't see the significance I am about to give